

Appln No. 10/733,824

Amdt date May 2, 2005

Reply to Office action of February 1, 2005

Amendments to the Specification:

On page 5, starting at line 14, to page 6, line 8, replace the paragraph as originally filed with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 2 is a bottom plan view of the gripper device 130 of the invention. Gripper device 130 has a cinching strap 3 mounted at end to a post 8 secured to a support structure or base plate 7. The gripper device 130 can be securely mounted on any surface (such as to the underside of a kitchen cabinet or to the side of a structure), in any axis by means, for example by mounting holes 10 in the base plate 7, although other means can be used. The other end 11 of the cinching strap 3 is attached to a pivoting arm 9, which is free to swivel about a pivot 16. Another method of mounting the cinching strap 3 in lieu of utilizing a post 8 is to mount the cinching strap 3 onto the top of a fixed ridge 12 (or fixed object contact surface). The fixed ridge 12 is attached to the baseplate 7 and can extend from it at about a 90-degree angle. The fixed ridge 12 can either be welded, bolted, or if plastic can be integrated with the base plate 7. The fixed ridge 12 preferably generally follows the arc 132 (shown in dashed lines) of the pivoting arm 9. The fixed ridge's 12 height is preferably roughly equal to the width of the cinching strap 3, which can be set to be roughly equal to the width of an average jar lid 1. The width of the strap should roughly equal the average ~~with~~ width of jar lids. Unless the invention is manufactured to grip the base of jar, as opposed to their lids, which would require a wider strap

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3. The material of the cinch strap 3 is selected so that it has enough tensile strength and friction. The pivoting arm's 9 travel is preferably limited by an upper stop 14 and a lower ~~15~~ stop 15. The purpose of the upper stop 14 is to allow some slack in the strap 3 so it can accept the jar lid 1. The pivoting arm 9 pivots around the attachment point 16, which can be designed with a bearing or bushing to improve longevity and smoothness of operation. A spring 17 or similar method of applying tension is attached to an end of the pivot arm 18, opposite attachment point 11, and at a point 19 located on the base plate 7. The purpose of the spring 17 is to return the pivot arm 9 to the open position (as shown) to allow it to accept a new jar's lid 1 to be opened. The base plate 7 not only holds all the pieces together, but also ensures alignment of the cinch strap 3 with the lid 1 and the fixed ridge 12.

On page 7, lines 22 to 27, replace the paragraph as originally filed with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 8 shows a cam 25 fitted to end of pivot arm 9. Cam 25 can be used to increase the force on the lid 1 during rotation. The cam's 25 surface facing the lid 1 may be a non-slip surface. The cinching strap 3 is mounted 8 on the cam 25 offset from the pivoting point 11. This will force the cinching strap 3 to bind tighter as the cam 25 contacts the counter-clockwise rotating lid 1 and the cam rotates clockwise. The rocker arm and cam can optionally be spring loaded to an open position of the stop 24 26.

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On page 11, starting at line 5, replace the paragraph as originally filed with the following amended paragraph:

FIGS. 19 and 20 show a hand held jar opener 190 using the pivot arm design. The pivot arm 76 and fixed ridge 82 are both smaller in dimensions as compared to the cabinet mounted gripper device 130, which may require that the user to take up the excess strap 3 length before use. To use, the user places the jar lid 1 in the tool as shown. The user pulls the loose end of the strap 3 and the jar lid 1 is cradled in place by ridge 79. The height of this cradling ridge 79 is roughly the same as the jar lid 1. Once the loose end of the strap 3 is pulled tight by the user, the jar lid 1 is ready for the user to unscrew it.